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SUBJECT: US-INDIA PEACEKEEPING JOINT WORKING GROUP MEETING

Classified By: PolCouns Geoffrey Pyatt for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

11. (C) Summary: At the fourth US-India Joint Working Group on Peacekeeping on February 14, IO PDAS Swigert underscored US concerns about sexual exploitation committed within UN peacekeeping ranks and asked India, a main troop contributor, to play a leading role to ensure that the problem is dealt with forcefully and effectively. The US delegation encouraged India to consider the merits of the "Peacebuilding Commission" recommended in the UN High-Level Panel (HLP) report, but India reacted coolly to the notion that a new body be created as a Committee of the Security Council. Both countries agreed that the increasing number and complexity of peacekeeping operations (PKOs) and the difficulty of transitioning from peacekeeping efforts to economic development are growing burdens on the international peacekeeping system. A "menu approach," "hybrid interventions," and regional approaches to peacekeeping were discussed as options to alleviate some of the burden on troop-contributing countries (TCCs). India raised UNSC reform in several contexts, asserting that current Security Council procedures lack transparency and that the UNSC is not representative of the developing world. The group agreed to convene a meeting of working-level experts to discuss operational issues and construct a framework for the next meeting, but did not specify a timeframe. End Summary.

12. (C) In opening remarks, both delegation heads expressed confidence that growing Indo-US relations would also enhance collaboration in peacekeeping efforts. MEA Joint Secretary Prakash specifically cited the US Enhanced International Peacekeeping Capabilities (EIPC) Initiative funding and joint exercises with the US Pacific Command as bringing the two governments even closer. Prakash hailed the timely and close cooperation between the two militaries in the aftermath of the Tsunami as further evidence of an expanding military relationship. IO PDAS Swigert emphasized the increasing strain expanded peacekeeping activity places on the UN, and explained the challenge for the USG as it responds to growing demands while maintaining troop levels in Iraq and cutting domestic spending at home. Summaries of agenda items follow.

Sexual Exploitation in Peacekeeping Operations

13. (C) Swigert stressed that the large-scale "sex for food" scandal in the DRC PKO will severely undermine the UN's ability to carry out UNSC resolutions. He made three recommendations to enforce the Secretary General's "zero tolerance" policy for abuse and exploitation:

-- All civil and military PKO personnel should receive training in the UN Code of Conduct and human trafficking;

-- Professional investigators, not UN human rights workers, should investigate allegations so that evidence can be used in civil or military trials;

-- Since the UN lacks prosecution authority, Special Representatives of the Secretary General for PKOs should have appropriate disciplinary and administrative tools to deal decisively with offenders.

14. (C) Swigert noted that India's standing as a leading contributor to UN PKOs puts it in an ideal position to propose corrective action to the UN, e.g., that all PKO participant nations be required to sign an agreement to uphold the UN "zero tolerance" policy and take appropriate disciplinary and administrative measures against violators. The Indian delegate responded that because this issue had only recently come to light, the GOI was not yet in a position to endorse such a recommendation and was still evaluating the problem and proposed solutions. Swigert reiterated the world must see the UN taking serious action on its own policy, not becoming mired in extended debate.

Indian Views on Multidimensional Peace Operations

15. (C) Prakash highlighted India's support of the UN system overall and its significant contributions to UN PKOs specifically. He enumerated several changes which add to the complexity of contemporary PKOs, including:

-- Nature of conflict: Non-state and intra-state actors are

becoming more prevalent, as are "spoilers" and terrorists;

-- Number of PKO participants: What was once a strictly military operation now includes civil police, human rights and election monitors, jailers, constitution writers, etc.;

-- Mandates: "Hybrid" mandates, i.e., where the UN takes over from a non-UN regional or national force, non-UN PKOs, and UN-mandated, but coalition-run PKOs. Prakash noted, however, that the regional approach to PKOs is not a universal model since there is no regional security organization in South Asia similar to NATO or the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS);

16. (C) Prakash then raised UNSC reform, a recurring theme from the Indian side during the meeting. Recognizing that most conflicts are in developing countries, he argued that the UNSC as presently constituted was not representative of the developing world and lacks transparency. Further, the "CNN/BBC factor" is creating more demand for intervention in areas where there is little capacity for an effective response by either the UN or regional entities.

17. (C) Swigert acknowledged that a regional approach to PKOs could raise questions about the legitimacy of such interventions, but added that it had great potential as well, pointing to the African Union (AU) mission for Darfur as an important example where a regional organization could do more than the UN to encourage a cease-fire by deploying monitors. On UNSC reform, Swigert stated that the US is seriously considering the recommendations presented in the UNSC's High Level Panel report, and is open to proposals for improving the organization, including the possible expansion of the Security Council, and stressing the importance of broad international consensus before adopting any structural reforms.

Peacekeeping Lessons Learned

18. (C) Identifying common ideas about how PKOs can be more effective in the future, US and Indian officials shared lessons learned from their experiences in Haiti, Liberia, and the DRC. Col. (ret) Brown presented a non-paper outlining US lessons learned in PKOs in Haiti and Liberia, including:

-- Military action should only be an interim measure until other options are available, such as intervention by a regional coalition or the UN;

-- Selecting a PKO leader with experience and credibility is critical for earning respect within the affected country and among the international community;

-- The UNSC must give UN planners authority to procure materiel and deploy staff rapidly; and

-- Root causes of instability must be addressed over the long-term by appropriate international, regional, and national entities, not by the military.

19. (C) Group Capt Gill, a Senior India Air Staff Officer recently returned from a command in MONUC in the DRC, reviewed positive factors in the Indian deployment in and around Bunia, beginning in July 2003. Among the factors Gill noted for the Indian units' success there:

-- Broad authority for Force Commanders;

-- Formation of a quick response team with airlift capability;

-- Active search for intelligence inputs;

-- Relative success sealing the border (he admitted the border was only about 60 percent "sealed");

-- Community involvement and immediate impact projects to improve infrastructure in their AOR;

-- A specific MOU detailing scope of work, vice standard MOU language; and

-- Committed troops with a high level of discipline.

10. (C) On the oft-discussed need for more robust mandates, Army Col Pithawala asserted that even "Chapter Six" missions, i.e., pure peacekeeping operations, must have the means and training to be more assertive so "spoilers do not get the upper hand" and endanger troops. Implementing a more robust mandate, however, takes additional time for training and "unlearning habits and mind-sets from previous missions." Underscoring the need for resources for intelligence gathering for both Chapter Six and Seven operations, Pithawala stressed the "need to spend resources to cultivate sources."

Role of Police in Peacekeeping

11. (C) Moran emphasized the necessity of civilian police (CIVPOL) units, along with functioning legal, justice, and prison systems to restore stability. He also discussed the challenge of coordinating the efforts of peacekeeping missions, including uniformed troops and CIVPOL, with those of UN agencies, bilateral donors and NGOs, noting that coordination problems are particularly acute in the case of demobilization, disarmament and reintegration campaigns. He outlined recent efforts to tackle complex crisis coordination issues within the USG through the creation of the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization (S/CRS). Noting that the HLP had taken note of some of these same difficult coordination issues and recommended the creation of a "Peacebuilding Commission," he distributed a paper describing the USG position to support the establishment of such a body under the Security Council.

12. (C) In the discussion that followed, the Indians responded that their national police and paramilitary forces have much to offer PKOs due to cultural diversity, IT skills, English language ability, and experience with numerous low-intensity conflicts at home. The Indian delegation also stated their police are better suited to conduct CIVPOL training than their European counterparts because of this real-world experience, and have set up a training facility using UN PK models.

Peacebuilding Commission

13. (C) In the following discussion on the UN HLP proposal to create a Peacebuilding Commission, Swigert explained that such a commission should be a subsidiary of the UNSC with observer participants from IFI's and ECOSOC, among others. Swigert stressed that this did not represent encroachment by the Security Council on General Assembly or ECOSOC issues. While the GOI has not taken an official position, Prakash expressed reservations that the proposed Peacebuilding Commission should be a Security Council Committee. Other GOI officials were concerned about how "failing" states would be identified, and felt the Security Council should stick to handling breaches of security and not have its authority extended to include failing states.

Emerging Challenges in Contemporary Peacekeeping

14. (U) The MEA's Nandini outlined overarching and operational challenges facing future PKOs, including:

- Increasing number, complexity, and expense of PKOs;
- The "CNN/BBC factor" which generates attention and demand for action around the world;
- Formalizing more flexible means of engagement, e.g., "hybrid interventions" of regional forces or other entities, followed by the UN;
- The need for rapid deployment in the face of perennial resource constraints;
- Safety and security of troops;
- Ensuring integration of all actors and effective transition at the right time; and
- "Soft challenges," such as increasing women's participation in PKOs, preventing sexual exploitation, etc.

15. (C) Nandini asserted that "hybrid interventions" in which regional or national troops would be deployed rapidly to critical situations in the months before a UNPKO can deploy should be standard operations. Formalizing this arrangement would ensure rapid crisis stabilization and give a UNPKO time to deploy. Discussion turned to the transition between "green helmets" and "blue helmets." The Indian delegation expressed concern that UN missions are often perceived as "less robust" following a peacekeeping intervention by US or other regional forces. Prakash asked if the US would consider joining the "blue helmets" during the transition period or extending their stay as "green helmets" after the "blue helmets" have arrived. Swigert noted a variety of ways the Security Council had acted to allay concerns about capabilities of UN missions, for instance by providing a strong Chapter Seven mandate and by recruiting capable, well-trained forces to follow the multinational forces, as India had done in following the EU "green helmets" in Eastern DRC. Swigert added that the US saw its contribution as most effective in providing "green helmets" in select circumstances, as the US had done in Haiti

and in off-shore forces in Liberia before UN blue helmets took over. The US evaluates each case individually, he stressed.

16. (C) Citing the recent downturn in events in Bangladesh and Nepal -- the first and fourth largest TCCs, respectively -- MEA's Prakash asked whether "democracy-deficient" countries should be allowed to participate as peacekeepers. Rather than trying to formalize a "democracy test," Swigert proposed that all TCCs should commit to uphold the UN Code of Conduct.

17. (C) As the destination of 80 percent of the UN's peacekeeping troops, including the two largest PKOs in the world (DRC and Liberia), Africa presents a special challenge to PKOs, according to Nandini. The question is how to support efforts to find "African solutions to African problems," be it through the African Union (AU) or regional configurations like ECOWAS. Prakash questioned the AU's capacity to respond effectively to current peacekeeping demands on the continent, adding that India would watch closely how the G8 responds to these needs. "Will the UN always be the first call and the last hope for Africa?" he asked.

Indo-US Cooperation in Peacekeeping

18. (C) Col Rajput presented an overview of the United Services Institutions' Center for UN Peacekeeping (USI/CUNPK). CUNPK offers training capsules for junior and senior officers, military observers and logistics officers, and conducts an outdoor military/CIVPOL field exercise that the UN has taken as a model for PK training. Indo-US cooperation has included a command post exercise, a lessons learned seminar with USPACOM, and \$800,000 in EIPC funds used to enhance capabilities of the Center.

19. (C) Concluding, Moran presented an overview of the new Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI), the successor of EIPC. The five-year, \$660 million program, with immediate focus on capacity building in Africa, would provide training and equipment for 75,000 peacekeeping personnel as well as deployment support and enhancement of gendarme-like capabilities. Moran stated that the US had found past cooperation with India under the EIPC program very fruitful, that the US had taken note of India's expertise in gendarme-like training in particular, and that the US welcomes India's interest in continued cooperation with the US in the peacekeeping training field.

Participants

20. (U) USG Participants:

Jim Swigert, PDAS, State/IO
Roger Moran, Dpty Dir, State/IO/Peacekeeping
LtCol James Thomas, Military Advisor, State/IO
Col (ret) Dallas Brown, Director of Peacekeeping, DOD/OSD
Maj Greg Winston, ODC, Embassy New Delhi
Stacy Gilbert, Pol-MilOff, Embassy New Delhi (notetaker)
MAJ Richard Bairett, PolOff, Embassy New Delhi (notetaker)

GOI Participants:

B.S. Prakash, MEA Joint Secretary, UN Political (UNP)
Bimal Julka, MOD Joint Secretary, Ground & Air
Hamid Ali Rao, MEA Joint Secretary, UN Economic & Social
Brig B.V. Nair, Army Deputy DG, Staff Duties Directorate
Saleem Ali, Inspector General (HQ), Indo-Tibetan Border Police
Col Cyrus A. Pithawala, Director, SD 3 UN Cell, Army HQ
Col R.K. Rajput, Secretary, Centre for UN Peacekeeping
Gp. Capt K.S. Gill, Senior Air Staff Officer, Advance HQ
K. Nandini, MEA Under Secretary, UNP
Raj Srivastava, MEA Under Secretary, W. Asia & North Africa
Siddhartha Nath, MEA Attache, UNP

21. (U) IO PDAS Swigert cleared this cable.
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